

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Gosberton held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

**Present:** Councillors: Tim Smith (Chairman), Mrs Sue Thorley (Vice-Chair), Mrs L Allen (LA), M Newton (MN), M Pell (MP), Mrs R Perry (RP), M Taylor (MT), Mrs L Tweddell (Clerk)

**Absent:** District Councillors C Johnson and Mrs J King, PCSO Colin Abbotts

**Public:** Three members of the public attended

**1. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2016 and matters arising**

The minutes of the AGM held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2017 were approved and signed and there were no matters arising.

**2. Letting of the Wastelands**

No notices on the Wastelands received therefore the tenants remain as:

Mr A Garner Gubboles Drove	£15
C F Harrison, Gubboles Drove	£30
Mr J Carrott, Westhorpe	£25
Mr M Baker, Chopdyke Drove	£20
Mr & Mrs D Stafford Westhorpe Pit	£ 25
Mr D Coxon, Sandiacre	£110

**3. Financial Statements of the Charities of the Parish**

- Robert Marjorum's Foundation supplied

**4. Chairman's Annual Report**

The Chairman tabled his report. See attached Appendix A Chairman's Report 2017.

**5. Public Session/Open Forum**

No issues raised.

**Meeting ended 7.45pm**

**Chairman** .....

## **Gosberton Parish Council**

### **Chairman's Annual Report 2016 / 2017**

First of all, I would like to thank our parish councillors for all the time and effort they devote to their duties. I would like to remind you that they do this on a completely voluntary basis. I believe every councillor is concerned for the well-being of the parish and has the best interests of the village at heart. I would also like to thank Lisa Tweddell (Clerk) and Simon Kitchen (Groundsman) for their hard work and those friends and relatives of our councillors who have given their time freely to help with the many maintenance tasks around the villages.

#### **Parish Councillors and Parish Councillor Meetings 2016 / 2017**

There have been eight meetings of Gosberton Parish Council since I took over as Chairman in May 2016. Councillors Waterfield and Perry (Roland) resigned their positions on the 19<sup>th</sup> April and 17<sup>th</sup> May 2016 respectively. The Chairman would like to thank them for all their hard work. Councillors Perry (Rona) and Newton were co-opted on to the council in August after satisfying the District Councils requirements for co-option. Advertising for new parish Council members to be co-opted in May 17 have been placed and hopefully Mr Roland Perry will be standing again.

#### **Finance**

##### ***Precept***

We have maintained our parish precept this year at £29,500. This includes a rolling reserve to help cover the future acquisition of cemetery land.

##### ***Auditor***

A new internal auditor Vivienne Gensiorskyj was appointed in February this year and will be responsible for auditing the accounts twice yearly.

##### ***Banking***

Electronic banking has been adopted and after a few, not insignificant teething problems, seems to be working. Transactions require second approval and Councillors Clerk, Smith and Taylor have access.

A new account was set up for charitable donations (Unknown Donors) in order to hold funds prior to disbursement.

##### ***Clerks Working Hours***

The clerk's current contracted hours are 12 per week. With an ever increasing workload it has been proposed that the clerk's hours are increased to 16 per week. This will be decided upon at the April meeting.

## **Working Groups**

### ***Finance***

A finance working group was adopted in November 2016 with the intention of meeting every quarter. It will be responsible for the Parish's financial matters reporting to the Councillors at the Parish Council meetings for resolution on any matter. It is hoped that this approach will improve the efficiency of the task and if successful other working groups maybe established. The group currently consists of the Clerk and Councillors Newton, Pell and Smith. There have been two meetings so far with another to be scheduled for April 17.

### **Playing Fields in Gosberton and Gosberton Risegate**

The parks continue to suffer from low level anti-social behaviour: defacing and vandalism of equipment, rubbish / litter and fouling by dogs. It is unlikely that this will change but responsibility to monitor the park falls on all residents. PCSO Abbotts has tried to catch the persistent offenders on a number of occasions without success so far.

With the recent levelling and tidying of the hedge at the front of the park it was discovered that the large ash trees require major work as one has a split trunk and the other a bracket fungus at the base. A tree survey is to be carried out and the Tree Preservation Officer contacted at SHDC to establish what if any previous survey exist.

On a more positive note the Rocking Horse was removed in September for restoration. The restoration was completed late 2016 with the Rocking being reinstalled in November. It certainly has lifted the park and I am sure it will get many more years of use. It should be noted that during the annual survey it was reported that the Rocking Horse was beyond economical repair with no company wishing to carry out the work. I would therefore like to thank all those involved for an outstanding job and giving so much time for free.

Also on a positive note Mrs Emma Walters of GCAT made a presentation to the Parish Council on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 16 presenting a new vision for the play area. Various new rides are proposed and the Parish Council was able to comment on the plans and are very supportive of this initiative. Much of the current play equipment will remain but will be enhanced with new disabled accessible equipment and located in a fenced area for added security. As both councillor's and members of GCAT are aware there is a considerable amount of money that needs to be raised and will be done through various fund raising events in the future.

It is also proposed that a small hardstanding area is laid in the park to ease the parking along the high street. In order to benefit from this in the shortest time frame initially a compacted base will be installed. In time as funds become available a more durable tarmac area will be laid.

There is little to report regarding the play area at Gosberton Risegate. Some damage to the bench was noted during the village inspection but quickly repaired.

### **Traffic and Highways Issues**

There has been much concern shown by local residents regarding the levels of traffic, particularly HGV, passing through the village. On the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2016 the Rt Hon John Hayes MP (South Holland) visited the village to see for himself the issues first hand. This meeting was attended by Turners (Donington), LCC Highways, Cllrs Clarke, Pell and myself and local residents who had already independently written to John Hayes. The meeting was positive and a report was raised on the visit. As a consequence there is now a schools crossing attendant although there will be no pedestrian crossing as requested due to limitation of funds. Passive speed road signs have been placed throughout the village and an interactive speed awareness sign has also been purchased by the Parish Council for use on the high street at various positions. This sign incorporates a speed recording device which will allow the Council to analyse average speeds throughout the day and will hopefully provide evidence that will help invoke action by the LCC. The Parish Council are currently looking at other positions suitable for interactive speed signs and the purchase of a second unit. PCSO Abbotts has also conducted speed traps with a hand held radar device but only around 2% of vehicles were found to be exceeding the limit. But it was acknowledged that generally vehicles slow down when radar traps are used.

It was proposed in December that the Parish Council consider the setting up of a Traffic Calming Focus Group consisting of both councillors and local residents. This proposal will be reconsidered later in 2017 when the effects on traffic speed of the interactive signage is understood.

### **Cemetery**

The cemetery mower is getting towards the end of its useful working life with maintenance charges beginning to accumulate. Consideration should be given to the purchase of a new machine in the next year or two.

The new cremation plots had gravel laid as required and the left hand pier supporting the access gate to the cemetery was hit by a large vehicle physically displacing it. This was repaired along with the gate. The cemetery will need to be expanded in the next five years and in order to do this new land will need to be acquired. To help facilitate this a 5 year plan has been proposed by Cllr Pell and will be undertaken by the Finance Working Group.

New cemetery signs (rules) have now been installed by the entrance gates.

### **Allotments**

The modern farm tenancy agreements were signed and received from the newly let allotments earlier in 2016 and Barchards allotment advertised and rented out in

October 2016. There are however still three outstanding tenancy agreements due and the tenants have been written to. These allotments were let many years ago and in order to ensure that the Parish Council can clearly demonstrate its effectiveness s6 notices have been served. This will allow any verbal or other agreement that was made in the past to be captured in writing. This process will be ongoing for the next 12 months. It should be noted that the issuing of s6 notices does not impact the tenants' rights.

### **Policing**

I would like to take the opportunity to thank PCSO Abbotts for his continued support over the past year. With the financial cuts affecting policing he is unable to attend all the meetings as would be preferred as he is now the only PCSO in the area. His new boss is PC James Perrin who took over the area in October 2016. PCSO Abbotts provides reports to the clerk in his absence.

There are the usual issues associated with rural areas including antisocial behaviour / nuisance neighbours, RTC's, theft and burglary, hare coursing and mud on roads. It is important that Councillors and residents report any crime to ensure that the statistics reflect the actual situation.

### **Planning**

Apart from the usual range of planning applications the Local Plan will be adopted which is looking to the development of 230 properties in the Gosberton Area. This has, understandably, caused some concerns with local residents which were expressed in the open forum of the December 2016 meeting regarding the land adjacent to York Gardens. As a result of this a letter was sent to SHDC outlining the objections heard at the meeting. This is going to represent a significant challenge over the coming months as the growth of the village is important if it is to continue thriving but this has to be balanced with the current residents quality of life which can be difficult to quantify. As such I think it is important that the Parish Council continues to carefully monitor the situation ensuring an even handedness in its approach.

### **Parish Council representation on other charities and committees**

The current charities and committees have Parish Council representation:

Robert Marjorum Charity	Sue Thorley (VC), John Clark and Mark Taylor
Relief in Need	John Clark, Sue Thorley (VC)
Public Hall	Mick Pell
G.C.A.T.	Mick Pell, Tim Smith
Unknown Donors	Lindsay Allen

## **Open Forums**

Two open forums have been attended by residents:

- Mr Hilary Bert reference Traffic – see Traffic and Highways Issues
- Residents of York Gardens – Reference planning application for new estate.

## **General**

### **Parish Website**

The clerk has begun and continues to populate the Parish website on <http://parishes.lincolnshire.gov>

### **Village Inspection**

The annual village inspection was carried out in June and Councillors visited the Cemetery, Gosberton Park, Gosberton Churchyard, Windmill Lane, Gosberton Risegate Park, Barchards allotments and Hundred Fen. As a result the chair spoke to Ian Walters reference the Church Yard and its maintenance. The Parish Council is unable to consider undertaking responsibility for its upkeep unless the Churchyard is legally closed. The trees in the Churchyard were pollarded as requested.

### **Summer holiday provision day**

Mr Darren Bisby-Boyd contacted the PC with respect to the above event. Unfortunately the PC were unable to support due to the need for toilets and a suitable venue to continue the activities in the event of rain.

Tim Smith  
Chairman